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# **Senate File 366**

## **Radon Control in Schools – Radon Notification and Testing**

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## INTRODUCTION

### **Radon in Schools**

A nationwide survey of radon levels in schools has estimated that nearly one in five has at least one schoolroom with a short-term radon level above the action level of 4 pCi/L (picocuries per liter) – the level at which the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recommends that schools take action to reduce the level.

The amount of radon gas in the air is measured in picocuries per liter of air. EPA recommends that schools take action to reduce the level of radon when levels are 4 pCi/L or higher.

### **SF 366 – Radon Notification and Testing**

2014 Iowa Acts Chapter 1094 (SF 366) requires the Iowa Department of Education to notify each public school district and accredited nonpublic school of the risks associated with radon gas at attendance centers. The Department completed this action by posting [radon in schools](#) information on the Department's website.

This legislation also directed each district and accredited nonpublic school to notify the Department by December 1, 2014, whether it has a radon testing and mitigation plan or any expectations to implement such a plan. This information was collected by the Department through the Fall 2014 Basic Educational Data Survey (BEDS).

## SUMMARY OF RADON SURVEY RESULTS

### General Information

- **338 public school districts reported data on the FALL 2014 BEDS.**
- **133 of 179 accredited nonpublic schools (144 state accredited and 35 independent accredited) reported data on the FALL 2014 BEDS.**
- **1,487 FY14 Public Educational Facilities (1,358 School Buildings)**
  - 666 Elementary School Buildings
  - 204 Middle School/Junior High School Buildings
  - 359 Secondary School Buildings
  - 129 K-12 School Buildings
  - 129 Administrative Buildings

### Survey Questions/Responses

#### 1. Does the public school district or accredited nonpublic school have a radon testing and mitigation plan that will be implemented by December 1, 2014?

##### No

- 278 public school districts (82%) reported no radon and mitigation plan implemented by December 1, 2014.
- 109 accredited nonpublic schools (82%) reported no radon and mitigation plans implemented by December 1, 2014.

##### Yes

- 60 public school districts (18%) indicated having a radon testing and mitigation plan that was implemented by December 1, 2014.
- 24 of the accredited nonpublic schools (18%) indicated having a radon testing and mitigation plan that was implemented by December 1, 2014.

#### ❖ How many school attendance centers have been tested for radon?

- Public school districts reported 233 school attendance centers were tested for radon.
  - 17% of Iowa's 1,358 school attendance centers were tested for radon.
- 28 accredited nonpublic school attendance centers were tested for radon.
  - 21% of approximately 133 accredited nonpublic attendance centers were tested for radon.

#### ❖ How many classrooms within the school/school district have been tested for radon?

- Public school districts reported 3,775 classrooms were tested for radon.
- Accredited nonpublic schools reported 168 classrooms were tested for radon.

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- ❖ **How many classrooms tested at 4pCi/L or greater?**
  - Public school districts reported 141 classrooms tested at 4pCi/L or greater.
    - 4% of the 3,775 classrooms tested at 4pCi/L or greater.
  - Accredited nonpublic schools reported 23 classrooms tested at 4pCi/L or greater.
    - 14% of the 168 classrooms tested at 4pCi/L or greater.
  
- ❖ **How many school attendance centers have been mitigated to reduce the levels of radon in buildings that tested 4pCi/L or greater?**
  - Public school districts reported 30 attendance centers, or 13% of the 233 attendance centers tested, were mitigated to reduce the levels of radon in buildings that tested 4pCi/L or greater.
  - Accredited nonpublic schools reported one attendance center, or 4% of the 28 attendance centers tested, was mitigated to reduce the levels of radon in buildings that tested 4pCi/L or greater.

**2. Does the public school district or accredited nonpublic school have plans to implement a radon testing and mitigation plan?**

**No**

- Of the public school districts that reported no radon testing and mitigation plan implemented by December 1, 2014, 165 of the 278 school districts, or 59%, reported no plans to implement a radon testing and mitigation plan.
- Of the accredited nonpublic schools that reported no radon testing and mitigation plan implemented by December 1, 2014, 69 of the 109 schools, or 63%, reported no plans to implement a radon testing and mitigation plan.

**Yes**

- Of the public school districts that reported no radon testing and mitigation plan implemented by December 1, 2014, 113 of the 278 school districts, or 41%, reported plans to implement a radon testing and mitigation plan later.
- Of the accredited nonpublic schools that reported no radon testing and mitigation plan implemented by December 1, 2014, 40 of the 109 schools, or 37%, reported plans to implement a radon testing and mitigation plan later.

❖ **What school year will the school or school district implement a radon testing and mitigation plan?**

- **2014-2015**
  - 28 of the 113 public school districts, or 25%, indicated intent to implement a plan during the 2014-2015 school year.
  - 11 of the 40 accredited nonpublic schools, or 27%, indicated intent to implement a plan during the 2014-2015 school year.
  
- **2015-2016**
  - 55 of the 113 public school districts, or 49%, indicated intent to implement a plan during the 2015-2016 school year.
  - 19 of the 40 accredited nonpublic schools, or 48%, indicated intent to implement a plan during the 2015-2016 school year.

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- **2016-2017**
  - 21 of the 113 public school districts, or 19%, indicated intent to implement a plan during the 2016-2017 school year.
  - 4 of the 40 accredited nonpublic schools, or 10%, indicated intent to implement a plan during the 2016-2017 school year.
  
- **2017-2018**
  - 5 of the 113 public school districts, or 4%, indicated intent to implement a plan during 2017-2018 school year.
  - 2 of the 40 accredited nonpublic schools, or 5%, indicated intent to implement a plan during the 2017-2018 school year.
  
- **2018-2019 or later**
  - 4 of the 113 public school districts, or 3%, indicated intent to implement a plan during the 2018-2019 school year or later.
  - 4 of the 40 accredited nonpublic schools, or 10%, indicated intent to implement a plan during the 2018-2019 school year or later.

## REFERENCES

Radon Survey Results were obtained from the **FALL 2014 [Basic Educational Data Survey \(BEDS\)](#)**.

Public Education Facilities Data obtained from the **[FY14 Facilities, Elections, and Sales Tax](#)** data collection.